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Grand Valley Anglers Chapter of Trout Unlimited

PO Box 3105 ~ Grand Junction, CO 81502
Home Phone 970-244-3087 ~ Email ddiekman@sprynet.com

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District
210 North Third Avenue
Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

To U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District

I support the Army Corps alternative in partially removing the four dams on the Lower Snake River. Five years ago the federal government promised to make the tough decisions necessary to restore Snake River salmon by the end of 1999. While 1999 is behind us, those tough decisions have yet to be made despite over four years and \$20 (see above note) million dedicated to a Snake salmon recovery strategy by NMFS and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

With over 200 regional scientists, the federal government's own Fish and Wildlife Service and PATH research, and state fisheries managers of the region indicating that partial dam removal presents the best chance for Snake River salmon recovery, the choice is clear: The four dams on the Lower Snake River must be removed. Recent research has narrowed our window of opportunity with the reports that Snake River spring and summer chinook salmon face extinction by the year 2017 without immediate action. Clearly in the case of Snake River salmon, the price of political delay in breaching these dams is extinction.

After over four years and sound scientific evidence, more studies and stalling can only amount to manipulation of the facts engineered to avoid a tough, but urgent decision. Snake River salmon don't have time to play politics. In 20 years when our children can only look to a photo to see what a wild salmon run looked like we will only have ourselves to blame for ignoring the science and the salmon.

Although our chapter is located in Colorado, many of our members have lived in, or visited the Northwest, and we are sincerely concerned about the fate of the Snake River salmon runs. I believe that, as a society, we have an obligation to preserve our natural resources for future generations. I recognize that there are many reasons for the decline in salmon stocks, however based on everything that I've read, breaching the dams presents the best chance for restoration. In addition to this, issues such as irrigation withdrawals, habitat destruction, water pollution and over harvest need to be addressed.

Sincerely,

Douglas Diekman, President